**MODULE 6: ENERGY ANATOMY LESSON**

**1: UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING WITH ENERGY**

**“When formless divinity moves into form, it does so through the building block of all matter - energy” - Kamini Desai**

Breath carries the essence of that which sustains all life. It is the life force or universal life energy that is the building block of material existence. It is an unexplainable force of energy that permeates all of existence and that flows through us through the breath. All the ancient and traditional wisdom systems of the world have recognized and named this life force or “Intelligent Pulse of Life”.

The Chinese call it Chi or Qi. The Japanese call it Seiki. In Vedic or Yogic philosophy, it’s called Prana. The Kahunas of Hawaii name it Mana. In Tibetan Buddhism it’s called Lüng. The Kaballastic tradition calls it Koach. The ancient San people of Southern Africa have named this awakened form of this powerful force N|OM.

This force pulsates through us through the breath. Through the breath we open up to it, become a channel for it and an expression of it. It is a generous, easily accessible force that can be harnessed, utilised and channeled.

Our tangible physical anatomy is designed and organized to support the flow of this energy to every cell of the body, right down to the quantum level through the cardiovascular, respiratory, neurological and musculoskeletal system all working in harmony. But there is also a more subtle system of energy anatomy that has been identified by ancient wisdom traditions that for the purposes of the breathwork practitioner is of vital importance.

Our beliefs, beliefs, habits of thinking, feelings and patterns of tension in the physical body impact on the free flowing of this energy with can interfere with the body’s self-healing ability. This eventually manifests as pain and illness both physically and psychologically.

Working with the breath is a way to clear these pathways in a way that is non-invasive, safe and accessible to anyone.

This module is focused on the understanding of how theses subtle energy pathways and layers are organized. The exploration of these pathways is particularly useful and relevant to the breathworker who is working with the creative art of life force itself for the purposes of healing, growth and transformation.

In Chinese Medicine, Chi energy moves through the body through 12 main pathways or Meridians organised vertically down the body and that carries this life force to all the organs and endocrine systems. Optimum health and vitality is based on the free flow of this energy. When the flow of this energy gets blocked, it can be opened through various healing methods such as acupuncture, massage, herbal medicine and movement therapies. Chi Gong is a very beautiful and powerful practice that involves coordinated breathing and movement as a way to balance chi.

The Japanese and Kalahari San and ancient yogis had a deep understanding of this energy and were masters of awakening this force and harnessing it. The Kundalini energy or N| OM is the fully awakened form of this energy that caused spontaneous rocking, moving or shaking. This full awakening of this energy was thought to be the secret to a vibrant life. N|om wakes up the sitting meditator, ignites the passive contemplator and supercharges the quiet pilgrim. It kicks open the spiritual lotus flower and accentuates the movement in it’s opening - The Bushmen’s way of Tracking God.

In conscious breathwork we work with both the subtle flow and a fully awakened form of this energy and must get comfortable with holding and playing with all the expressions of this life force.

According to tantric philosophy, Kundalini energy is symbolised by a sleeping serpent. When this energy is awakened, the symbolic snake or ‘Shakti‘ energy which is the feminine creative force uncoils and moves upward through the energy pathway in the centre of the spine, piercing through all the chakras where it meets and unites with the male divine energy which resides at the crown chakra at the top of the head.

This is the divine union of the feminine and masculine energy which resides within each individual. It is said that enlightenment is experienced when this union occurs.

For some, this awakening happens spontaneously, while performing ordinary activities. For others it occurs with certain spiritual practices as described above.

One can also feel this energy rising in a breathwork session and is often experienced as a sexual energy that stirs up from the pelvis.

In Kundalini, energy and sexual energy is one and the same - being the energy of the creative force - and when it is harnessed and channeled it can move up to the higher chakras – opening the heart center and compassion. Many people, however, get stuck in the lower chakras and focuses upon expressing this energy in a purely sexual way, losing the opportunity to transform sexuality into spirituality.

For most others on the spiritual path, this upward ascent of Kundalini energy occurs gradually, as we raise our consciousness from survival through to self-actualization. We will talk more about this in the next lesson on the Chakras.

*“When Kundalini is uncoiled, she will force her way upward, bursting through barriers to stir up feelings, emotion creativity and to give life. She shatters the established order with her thrust towards evolution” - Rudolph Ballentine, Radical Healing*

For a long time in the West, Kundalini energy, chakras and energy pathways were vague, esoteric concepts.

Now there are very exciting and groundbreaking studies to validate the existence of the Kundalini experience and to measure its effects through certain parameters such as Cellular energy levels, immune responses, psychological and emotional health, neurological changes in the brain, genetic transformation and expression of extraordinary abilities.

One such study was done in 2011 in Bangalore India at the Sri Nityanananda Mission Read more about it here [www.nithyananda.org](http://www.nithyananda.org).

How is Kundalini energy relevant to breathwork?

As a breathworker, it is important to be comfortable with and to relax into all the feelings and sensations that occur as this ultra-potent living electricity moves through you, activating, healing and transforming every level of being on a consciousness level and down to each physical cell. The natural and free movement of this energy through you creates the opportunity for you to experience your divine nature.

It is also important to recognize and work with Kundalini energy in your clients. When clients fear the energy that gets activated with the breath, and tighten up to contain it, it builds up and can be experienced as pain. During the session you can support your client to relax and feel safe - remind them it is just a feeling, that all feelings are welcome. Encourage them to surrender and breathe into the feeling, the place.

**EXERCISE**

At the base of your torso is what is called the "PC Muscle." That's the muscle you use when you want to hold back your urine...when you need to control the urge to pee. Locating this muscle, isolating it, and consciously tensing and relaxing this muscle while you breathe is an ancient tantra technique. It is a way to raise your sexual energy and to awaken "kundalini."

A basic tantric exercise is to tense the pc muscle and draw sexual energy up to your heart while you inhale; then relax the pc muscle and send that energy as love and light out through your heart while you exhale. Practice this technique and notice the feelings and sensations that arise. Are you able to really fall into the experience? Where do you feel resistance? Write down your experience while doing this technique Are you becoming aware of any belief systems within yourself as you were reading through this lesson and practicing this technique? Write them down.

A breath technique that also activates the kundalini energy and the pc muscle and the 2nd chakra is to do reverse respiration, contracting the abdomen on the inhale, and consciously raising the breath to the heart chakra and then exhale, sending the breath down and out and expanding the abdomen and the pelvis. Which technique works better for you?